



Executive Summary

The prevalence of overweight and obesity has become one of the most critical health issues in both South Carolina and the United States. U.S. Surgeon General Richard Carmona has called obesity America's single biggest health problem. Overweight and obesity cut across all ages, economic levels, and racial and ethnic groups. In South Carolina, over sixty percent of all adults are now either overweight or obese. This issue also affects South Carolina's younger citizens, as 25% of high school students and 25 percent of low-income children, ages 2 -5, are overweight or at risk of overweight.

Overweight and obesity and the associated risk factors of unhealthy eating and inadequate amounts of physical activity increase the risk for developing other chronic conditions and diseases, such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, certain cancers, arthritis, sleep apnea, and depression. These chronic conditions result in a significant toll to the health care system. The total cost of obesity in the United States was \$117 billion in 2000. Obesity-attributable medical costs for South Carolina alone reached over one billion dollars in 2003.

Obesity is a complex condition, with behavioral, biological, and environmental factors, and the causes are not yet completely understood. However, for most people, overweight and obesity are the result of an imbalance between caloric intake and caloric expenditure. Healthy lifestyles that include regular physical activity and good eating habits are the most effective way to prevent obesity, yet these goals are often difficult for people to achieve in today's society.

To address these factors and influences, a comprehensive strategic approach for South Carolina has been developed. This framework for action, *Moving South Carolina Towards a Healthy Weight: Promoting Healthy Lifestyles and Healthy Communities*, is based on the best scientific evidence currently available. Activities and initiatives outlined will address the full spectrum of South Carolina life, from corporate boardrooms to rural churches; from medical centers to daycare centers to strategically influence individuals, families, communities, organizations, and the policies and environments that shape our behavior. This framework can be used by policy makers, individuals, and organizations at all levels to guide and inform actions and activities to create supportive environments for a healthier South Carolina.



Vision

Moving South Carolina towards a healthy weight through healthy lifestyles and healthy communities.

Mission

The mission of SCCOPE is to foster statewide coordinated, collaborative, and sustainable efforts leading to the increased capacity for promoting healthy weight, controlling obesity, and decreasing the burden of obesity-related chronic diseases in South Carolina.

Goals

1. Increase the percentage of South Carolinians who meet the current age specific recommendations for regular physical activity.
2. Increase the percentage of South Carolinians who consume at least five servings of fruits and vegetables a day.
3. Increase the percentage of South Carolina mothers who breast-feed for at least six months.
4. Increase the percentage of South Carolinians who achieve and maintain a healthy weight.
5. Decrease the burden of obesity and obesity-related chronic diseases.
6. Increase the number of research projects in South Carolina related to obesity prevention and control.

Milestones

A comprehensive, coordinated statewide effort to promote healthy weight.

Communities support and promote the adoption of policy and environmental strategies to improve nutrition and increase physical activity.

Improved health of all populations who are affected by the burden of obesity and chronic diseases.

Key Objectives include:

Business and Industry:

- Adopting policies supportive of physical activity
- Adopting healthy nutrition policies
- Making the workplace environment breastfeeding friendly

Community and Faith-Based Organizations:

- Nutrition
 - ◻ Implementation of a Healthy Dining Program
 - ◻ Increasing access to fruits and vegetables
 - ◻ Increasing healthy food options in youth programs outside of school
- Physical Activity
 - ◻ Providing accessible and affordable opportunities for physical activity
 - ◻ Improving the built environment to support safe physical activity as a normal part of everyday life



Schools:

- Increasing the availability of healthy foods and opportunities for physical activity
- Adopting the State Department of Education's Recommendations for Improving Student Nutrition and Physical Activity
- Provide training and support to schools in pursuit of a healthy environment.

Health Care Systems:

- Increasing policies, improve the health care environment, and enhance provider knowledge to support breastfeeding
- Provide education to health professionals on national guidelines and protocols for weight management, and the role overweight and obesity play in chronic disease management
- Advocating for initiatives and policies that support breastfeeding, healthful eating, physical activity and healthy weight

Research:

Research efforts looking at the risk factors, health consequences, and economic impact of obesity will influence and shape how best to address all facets of obesity and associated chronic diseases, due to the complexity of the issue and the numerous unanswered questions that remain. Because of the strong research capacity in South Carolina, a goal to specifically increase obesity-related research in the state has been included.

- Collaborate to strengthen obesity-related research opportunities
- Form a SCCOPE Research Subcommittee

This guide underscores the importance of a strong foundation in all levels of the South Carolina community and the significant benefit from working together to leverage resources, knowledge, and energy toward a shared vision for the state.

This framework represents a starting point and a long-term commitment will be essential in effectively impacting this public health epidemic. A society and culture supportive of healthy behaviors designed to address every aspect of daily life is critical to address obesity and improve health.



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Strategic Goals

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Improved health of all populations who are affected by the burden of obesity and chronic disease



Introduction

The prevalence of overweight and obesity has become one of the most critical health issues in both South Carolina and the United States. U.S. Surgeon General Richard Carmona has called obesity America's single biggest health problem. Overweight and obesity cut across all ages, economic levels, and racial and ethnic groups. In South Carolina, over sixty percent of all adults are now either overweight or obese. This issue also affects South Carolina's younger citizens, as 25% of high school students as well as 25 percent of low-income children, ages 2 -5, are at risk of

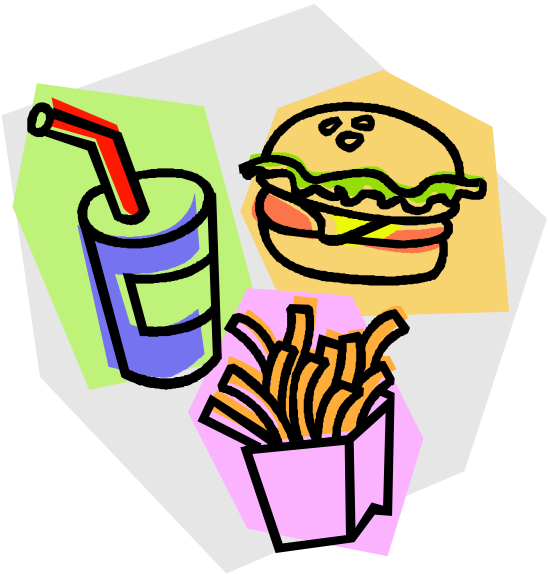
overweight or are overweight.



Overweight and obesity and the associated risk factors of unhealthy eating and inadequate amounts of physical activity increase the risk for developing

other chronic conditions and diseases, such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, certain cancers, arthritis, sleep apnea, and depression. These chronic conditions result in a significant economic toll to the health care system. The total cost of obesity in the United States was \$117 billion in 2000. Obesity-attributable medical costs for South Carolina alone reached over one billion dollars in 2003 (*TFAH, 2005*).

Obesity is a complex condition, with behavioral, biological, and environmental factors, and the causes are not yet completely understood. However, for most people, overweight and obesity are



caloric intake and caloric expenditure. Healthy lifestyles that include regular physical activity and good eating habits are the most effective way to prevent obesity, but these goals are often difficult for people to achieve in today's society.

There have been significant changes in American life that influence lifestyles and subsequent weight patterns. America has moved from a farm-based or labor-based economy to a more sedentary service-based economy.

- Physical education classes and recess time in schools have been reduced;
- Children are spending more time at home in front of televisions and computer games.

In South Carolina, over sixty percent of all adults are now either overweight or obese.

There has been a progressive shift in dietary habits, including increased consumption of convenience foods, sweetened beverages, and increased portion sizes (*IOM, 2005*).



A Strategic Framework

To address these factors and influences, a comprehensive strategic outline for South Carolina has been developed. This framework for action is based on the best scientific evidence currently available. Activities and initiatives outlined will address the full spectrum of South Carolina life, from corporate boardrooms to rural churches, from medical centers to child care centers. This framework can be used by policy makers, individuals, and organizations at all levels to guide and inform actions and activities to create supportive environments for a healthier South Carolina.

The development of this strategic framework is the first step in an ongoing collaborative and dynamic process between state agencies, business and industry, health care organizations, schools, academia, and a broad range of other stakeholders. Collectively, this diverse group of partners working together to promote healthy lifestyles and healthy communities, is the **South Carolina Coalition for Obesity Prevention Efforts** (SCCOPE).

The goals that will measure the success of statewide efforts are complemented by three milestones:

These milestones will guide efforts to address overweight and obesity, a critical health challenge that affects every facet of the South Carolina community:

- § A comprehensive and coordinated statewide approach to obesity prevention and control that will enhance new and existing efforts in the state.
- § Policy and environmental initiatives that will lead to sustainable changes throughout SC communities.
- § Improved health of all affected by the burden of obesity and obesity-related chronic diseases.

Moving South Carolina towards a healthy weight will require initiatives at multiple levels reaching the individual, the community, and the environments in which South Carolinians live, work, and play.

